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Denholme Urban Sanitary Authority.

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**ANNUAL REPORT**  
OF THE  
**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**

on the Sanitary condition of the Denholme Urban Sanitary  
District, with tabular returns of mortality,

**DURING THE YEAR 1925.**

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F. CATHERALL, PRINTER, DENHOLME.



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THORNTON, BRADFORD,

May, 1926.

TO THE DENHOLME URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting for your consideration my Annual Report on the health and sanitary condition of your District for the year ending December 31st, 1925.

And at the same time I purpose to make a survey of the vital statistics and sanitary progress during the past five years. The vital statistics do not give us any striking figures. The population being small and almost stationary, and consequently having a preponderance of aged people, there is a constant and regular percentage of deaths from senile diseases. During the past five years fifty per cent of the deaths each year has been of persons over sixty-five years of age.

When we turn to the sanitary progress there is much and commendable work to record. In my report in 1921 I pointed out that the great need of the district was extension of main sewerage in the centre of the village, and conversion from the conservancy to the water-borne system of sewage disposal. In another part of my report I will be able by comparing the figures at that time with those of the present to show more clearly what has been done.

#### NATURAL and SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

POPULATION. The population of the district at the census of 1921 was 2981. The estimated population at the middle of 1925 is 3007.

PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE DISTRICT. The District covers an area of 2563 acres. Except for the village itself it is mainly grass land, with wide stretches of rough moorland, at an elevation of 800 to 1400 feet above sea level. Many acres are also covered by large reservoirs. The district is divided into two separate parts; the Denholme Central district and the Denholme Clough District. It is bounded on the north by the Urban District of Bingley, west by that of Oxenhope, and east and south by the county boroughs of Bradford and Halifax. The natural drainage of the district consists of three small brooks which unite and form the Hewenden beck, flowing towards Bingley, where it enters the river Aire. One small portion drains towards Oxenhope.

The population is almost entirely of the well-to-do artizan class engaged in the woollen mill, dye-works, and stone quarries of the district. They are a clean, industrious and thrifty people, and their dwellings, which are mostly well-built and ventilated stone houses, though mostly of the back-to-back type, are well kept, clean, and sanitary.

There were 885 inhabited houses in the district in 1921, occupied by 935 families or separate occupiers.

The rateable value of the district for 1925 was £13931 15s.

The sum represented by a penny rate was £57 10s.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

**BIRTHS.** The Births registered in the district during the year numbered 36; 19 being males and 17 females, one male child being illegitimate. This gives a birth-rate equal to 11·9 per 1000 of the population. The rate for the whole of England and Wales for the same period was 18·3. The respective rates in the district each year since 1921 have been 20·4, 13·9, 15·8, 14·6, and the present rate 11·9. Except for 1921 when the rate was high throughout the country, the birth rate is always low, but this last year is particularly low, due I believe, as I have stated before to the large proportion of aged people composing the population.

**DEATHS** The Deaths registered as actually occurring in the district numbered 30; of these one belonged to another district, leaving 29. In addition there were 5 persons belonging to this district who died elsewhere bringing the number up to 34, of whom 13 were males and 21 females, giving a death rate equal to 11·3 per 1000 of the population. For the whole of England and Wales it was 12·2. The rates in this district for the five years from 1921 have been 16·7, 11·8, 16·1, 12·7, and the present year 11·3.

The various ages at which these 34 deaths occurred may be classified as follows;

|                                |     |    |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|
| Under 1 year of age            | ... | 0  |
| 1 year and under 5 years       | ... | 0  |
| 5                      15    " | ... | 1  |
| 15                    25    "  | ... | 0  |
| 25                    65    "  | ... | 15 |
| 65 years and upwards           | ... | 14 |

I think this is quite remarkable that in a whole year there was only one death of a person under 25 years of age.

**ZYMOTIC DISEASES.** There were no deaths registered as due to any of the recognized Zymotic diseases.

**TUBERCULOSIS.** There were no deaths due to Tuberculosis diseases.

**RESPIRATORY DISEASES,** There were 4 deaths attributed to diseases of the respiratory organs, 2 from Pneumonia and 2 from Bronchitis. This gives a respiratory death-rate equal to 1.3 per 1000 of population. In the previous year it was 2.6.

**INFANTILE MORTALITY.** As I have shown above there was not a single death of an infant under one year of age, the mortality thus being nil. For England and Wales the figure was 75.

## GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

**HOSPITALS.** There is no Hospital situated in the district neither do I think is there any need for one, being so close to and having good means of communication with Bradford, Halifax and Keighley, all of which have good general hospitals, and willingly take our cases needing hospital treatment.

Tuberculosis cases needing institutional treatment are dealt with by the West Riding County Council in one of their Sanatoria. Maternity cases and those suffering from Puerperal fever are by arrangement with the North Bierley Guardians received into their hospital at Clayton some five or six miles away. Fever and Small Pox cases when necessary are sent to the Stoney Ridge Infectious Diseases Hospital of the Shipley Urban District Council by arrangements made with that body and for which an annual retaining fee is paid.

**AMBULANCE FACILITIES.** An ambulance is sent by the various hospitals for the removal of cases as required.

**PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.** I have for some years advocated the appointment of a District Nurse, and I am pleased to report that that is now an accomplished fact. At a public meeting in December, 1924, it was decided to form a District Nursing Association. A committee and officers were elected, and a canvas of the village undertaken. Voluntary subscriptions have come in very well, and in June, 1925, Nurse Bush, a Queen's nurse was appointed and commenced duties. She has already done good work, and her services are much appreciated. She holds the certificate of the Central Midwives' Board, and therefore the West Riding County Council make a contribution towards her maintenance. She has also carried out some ante-natal work.

**MIDWIVES.** There are two registered midwives practising in the area; one the nurse above mentioned, the other one registered as practising under the old regulations. They are inspected at regular intervals by the County Inspectors.

LEGISLATION IN FORCE. Bye-laws and Regulations for cleansing of footways and pavements, scavenging, prevention of nuisances, and common lodging houses were adopted April, 26th, 1866, new streets and buildings, July 4th, 1924, and part III of the Public Health Acts (Amendment Act 1907) has also been adopted.

The Public Health Officers of the Authority consist of a part-time service Medical Officer of Health, and a Sanitary Inspector, who is also Surveyor of Highways.

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

WATER SUPPLY. Your district is well supplied with water of good quality and high purity. It is chiefly from the reservoirs of the Bradford Corporation and of Messrs. W. & H. Foster, Ltd. It is gathered from the moorlands high above any possible contamination. Its only disadvantage is its plumbosolvent action, but satisfactory means of hardening the water so as to guard against that have been taken, and I have not heard of any cases of lead poisoning during the past year. Hand bills have been distributed advising householders to allow the water taps to run a little each morning before drawing off water for drinking and cooking purposes. Some outlying parts of the district and some of the farms have to depend upon wells and springs for their supply, but it is generally very plentiful and of good quality. The supply throughout the year has been constant.

RIVERS AND STREAMS. There are only three small streams in the district, and a great part of their water consists of overflow from the various reservoirs. There has not been any evidence of pollution of these during the year.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE. The drainage, sewerage, and means of sewage disposal has been vastly extended and improved during the past five years, so much so, that the central area is almost complete. The outlying parts to the north and the south of the village are so peculiarly situated that a scheme of sewerage for them is a matter of great engineering difficulty and very great expense. It will require grave consideration and expert advice.

During the year 1925, 173 yards of new 6 in sewers, and 22 yards of relaid 6 in. sewers have been completed. In the two previous years they were respectively 551 and 302 yards, making a total of 1048 yards of new sewers laid in the last three years, which means that the sewerage of the central area is now almost complete.

The sewage outfall works were completed in 1923, and have been in operation ever since. They have been reported as being quite satisfactory.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION. As a consequence of the extended sewerage and sewage disposal outfall, the closet accommodation is very greatly improved, and our aim of converting as far as possible all closets in the central area from the conservancy system to the water-borne has materialised satisfactorily.

During the year 1925, 65 additional water closets have been provided. The closet accommodation now, compared with that in 1920, is as follows :

|                     | 1925 | 1920 |
|---------------------|------|------|
| Privy with middens  | 391  | 512  |
| Pail or Tub Closets | 16   | 14   |
| Waste-water Closets | 32   | 32   |
| Water Closets       | 269  | 85   |

When it is remembered that the conversions are all in the central area, and that in the outlying parts the privy-midden system must necessarily continue for some time ; it is easy to realise what a vast improvement sanitarily this must mean. And in addition the disappearance of so many unsightly and unsavoury privy-middens from the closely crowded streets allows more light and more air-space to render its beneficent effect. In this respect I must mention that the firm of Messrs. W. & H. Foster, Ltd. in the year 1924 converted all the closets in their factory from a pail system to water closets. In all they they constructed 71 water closets, so that all parts of the factory are now provided with water closets, separate and distinct for males and females. They are well constructed, well lighted, with free ventilation, and easily accessible.

SCAVENGING. The scavenging of the district is carried out by the Council's own staff, and upon the whole is done very satisfactorily. During the year 1925 your Council erected a Destructor for the disposal by incineration of house refuse. It is in full use and is giving full satisfaction. Much household refuse which formerly remained for some time in the middens and encouraged rats to infest them is now gathered regularly from door to door and destroyed. The number of loads taken to the destructor during the year was 259, and to the tips 581, farmers taking about 10 loads. The cost of scavenging to the Council was £266.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA. The district is regularly and systematically inspected. During the year 1925 the Sanitary inspector made 193 inspections for nuisances only. 15 nuisances were reported. 13 informal notices were served, all

of which were complied with. 2 statutory notices were served and one summons was issued. The occupants of two houses were proceeded against for having filthy and insanitary dwellings; one being destitute was persuaded to go into the Union, the other being summoned, an order was made to have the house cleansed, which was done by your sanitary staff.

Smoke observations have been taken but no action has been called for.

The knacker's yard at Jerusalem farm, where bone boiling and maggot breeding are carried on, has been inspected four times in the year and its condition found to be satisfactory.

SCHOOLS. The one Elementary school in the district has been inspected on several occasions and has been found to be in a good sanitary condition, and with a plentiful supply of water

## HOUSING.

GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS. The houses in the district are mostly well-built stone dwellings. Many of them are now very old and rather crowded together, not all having sufficient air space at back or front, a large proportion being of the back-to-back type. Quite 95 per cent are working-class cottage dwellings and lacking modern conveniences. No new houses have been built during the year, and only five in the last five years. There is some overcrowding in a few cases, mostly due to the limited bedroom accommodation, and in some cases to the fact that more than one family occupy the same dwelling. There are no houses let in lodgings, and no tents, vans, or sheds. Except to relieve the overcrowding there is no great demand for more houses, the population being almost stationary; yet if more modern houses were erected, I believe many would transfer their tenancies from the old property to them, and also many new residents might be tempted to the district.

## INSPECTION and SUPERVISION of FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY. The supply of milk in the district is very plentiful and mostly of good quality. The greater part of the milk produced is sent to the neighbouring town of Bradford for distribution. The two registers for retailers and cowkeepers or wholesale traders are strictly kept. No certified or graded milk is produced. There are 32 cowkeepers in the district producing and selling milk. About 256 cows are housed in 61 cowsheds, to which 122 visits of inspection have been made in 1925.

The Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops regulations were adopted in July 1924. The cowsheds are not all that could be desired, and closer attention must be paid to this department.

MEAT. There are 6 slaughter houses in the district, 5 being registered and 1 licensed; only 2 of these are in regular use. Notice is given of time of slaughtering under the Public Health (Meat) regulations of 1924.

The following table shows the number of private slaughter houses respectively registered and licensed in the district at the dates mentioned.

|            | 1920 | January 1925 | December 1925 |
|------------|------|--------------|---------------|
| Registered | 3    | 4            | 5             |
| Licensed   | 2    | 1            | 1             |

Only one seizure of unsound food has been made. In this case about 200 eggs were seized and destroyed.

BAKEHOUSES. There are 5 bakehouses in the district, these are well kept, clean and sanitary.

No proceedings have been taken during the year under the Food and Drugs Acts.

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year 13 cases of Scarlet fever were notified, of these 4 were removed to Hospital for isolation at Stoney Ridge Hospital of the Shipley Urban District Council, with whom your Council has made arrangements for the isolation of cases as required. The cases were all of a comparatively mild nature and all recovered. One case of Encephalitis Lethargica was notified in the month of February. It was a young woman aged 17 years, and although it was a severe case she recovered sufficiently to be able to resume work about the end of the year. One case of Chicken Pox and 11 cases of Measles were also notified, They all recovered.

Since 1920 the chief Infectious diseases occurring in the district have been Scarlet Fever, Measles and Diphtheria, but the epidemics have never assumed grave dimensions; for instance there have only been 8 cases of Diphtheria in the five years, and in the same period only 3 cases of Enteric Fever were notified. It has not been found necessary to apply the Schick or Dick tests for Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever respectively.

No vaccinations or re-vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Small Pox Prevention regulations of 1917.

In March, April, and May of 1923, Measles of a severe nature became so prevalent among young children that on my advice the infants department of the Elementary school was closed for three weeks.

During the month of February Influenza was very prevalent in the district. Children seemed to be especially liable to it, and it attacked them to such an extent that the attendances at the Elementary school fell by fully 50 per cent, so it was thought advisable to close the school for a time. This was done from the 16th to the 23rd of the month with partial success.

During February and March there were many cases of Jaundice among children, mostly from 5 to 10 years of age, one aged 9 years, being fatal.

Notifications from the school of cases of suspected infectious disease have been very helpful.

**TUBERCULOSIS.** Four cases of Tuberculosis were notified during the year, two of these by the school medical officer. One case was removed to a sanatorium for treatment. No deaths occurred during the year from this disease.

Dispensary and Sanatorium treatment is provided by the West Riding County Council Health Department and is quite satisfactory.

**VENEREAL DISEASES.** These cases are mostly treated by private Medical Practitioners and at the clinic at the Bradford Royal Infirmary.

In conclusion, I must congratulate your Council on the great improvement sanitarily in the district during the past five years. In addition to the improved drainage I have noted that the streets are generally cleaner and well kept. The road surfaces have been improved and the footpaths and channeling put in better repair.

For the future, I consider the greatest needs are more houses of a modern type with plenty of air space; some sewerage scheme for the south and the north parts of the district; and, thirdly, more strict attention to the sanitary condition of the cowsheds, for many of these are structurally bad and not fit places for the production of the most important food of the inhabitants, especially growing children upon whom the future depends.

I append Tables C. and D.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

A. E. TUNSTALL, L.R.C.P. & L.R.C.S., Ed.



